

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1-9 have been amended. Claims 1, 7 and 9 are independent. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification as originally filed, and specifically at pages 7-8, 13-18 and FIGS. 2 and 3. No new matter has been introduced. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 were objected to due to various informalities. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 are hereby amended, thereby obviating the objections.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph and claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The claims are hereby amended, thereby obviating these rejections.

III. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,640,301 to Ng. Claims 4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,640,301 to Ng in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,656 to Zabetian.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites, *inter alia*:

“...the electronic mail is transmitted from the first party communication terminal to the first attorney communication terminal such that the electronic mail is routed to the communication contents certification apparatus and the communication contents certification apparatus obtains authentication information for the electronic mail and stores the contents of the electronic mail,

the electronic mail is transmitted from the first attorney communication terminal to the first party communication terminal ... routed to the communication contents certification apparatus...

the electronic mail is transmitted from the first party communication terminal to the second party communication terminal ... routed to the communication contents certification apparatus ...

the electronic mail is transmitted from the second party communication terminal to the second attorney communication terminal ... routed to the communication contents certification apparatus...

the electronic mail is transmitted from the second attorney communication terminal to the first party communication terminal...is routed to the communication contents certification apparatus...

the charging means perform charge processing to said first and second parties, and said first and second attorneys, for use of said communication contents certification apparatus.” (emphasis added)

As understood by Applicant, U.S. Patent No. 6,640,301 to Ng relates to certification and authentication of emails by an authentication service. The authentication service is integrated with an email web site that allows users to set up email accounts. Outgoing email from the email web site is routed to the authentication service. A message identifier (ID)

is generated and added to the message within markers. A random-number generator creates random pad characters that are added to the message before a checksum is generated. The checksum and the pad characters are stored in a table indexed by the message ID. The pad characters and the checksum are placed in secure storage and not available to users or others on the Internet. The email with the message ID in the markers but without the pad characters or checksum is sent to the recipients, along with instructions on how to authenticate the message. Others can authenticate a message by emailing it to the authentication service. The message ID is extracted from the markers and used to find the checksum and pad characters in the table. The pad characters are again added to the message and a new checksum generated. Authentication fails when the checksums do not match. An authentication-result message is added to the message before it is returned. (see Abstract)

It is respectfully submitted that the cited portions of U.S. Patent No. 6,640,301 to Ng (hereinafter, merely “Ng”), as applied by the Examiner, do not teach or suggest the above-identified features of claim 1. Specifically, Ng fails to teach or suggest the transmission process recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that Ng fails to teach or suggest charging means perform charge processing to the first and second parties, and the first and second attorneys, for use of the communication contents certification apparatus, as recited in independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable.

Independent claim 7, as amended, recites, *inter alia*:

“...transmitting the electronic mail from a first party communication terminal to a first attorney communication terminal such that the electronic mail is routed through a communication contents certification apparatus, that authenticates and stores the electronic mail;

transmitting the electronic mail from the first attorney communication terminal to the first party communication terminal, such that the electronic mail is routed through the communication contents certification apparatus...;

transmitting the electronic mail from the first party communication terminal to a second party communication terminal, such that the electronic mail is routed through the communication contents certification apparatus...;

transmitting the electronic mail from the second party communication terminal to a second attorney communication terminal, such that the electronic mail is routed through the communication contents certification apparatus...; and

transmitting the electronic mail from the second attorney communication terminal to the first party communication terminal, such that the electronic mail is routed through the communication contents certification apparatus, that authenticates and stores the electronic mail." (emphasis added)

Applicant submits that Ng does not teach or suggest the above-identified features of claim 7. Specifically, Ng fails to teach or suggest the transmitting procedure recited in claim 7. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 7 is patentable.

Independent claim 9 is a corresponding computer-readable medium claim and is believed patentable for similar reasons.

Applicant submits that nothing has been found in the cited portions of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,656 to Zabetian (hereinafter merely, "Zabetian") that would provide the disclosure lacking in Ng.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosures in the cited references it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicant respectfully requests early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,
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